

**CLAIMS**

1. A method for storing and accessing electronic content, the method comprising:

- (a) storing content objects in a structured manner in a content store;
- (b) identifying some of the content objects in the content store as shortcuts, pointing to other objects in the content store; and
- (c) when a shortcut is accessed, automatically accessing the target object pointed to by that shortcut from the content store, and returning said target object in place of the shortcut object.

2. A method according to Claim 1 wherein said content objects include a plurality of web pages.

3. A method according to Claim 1 including enabling aspects of the target object to be modified by the shortcut when the target object is accessed through the shortcut.

4. A method according to Claim 3 including:

- (a) assigning properties to content objects, including shortcuts; and
- (b) causing the properties of a shortcut to override any corresponding properties of the target object it points to.

5. A method according to Claim 4 wherein a plurality of shortcuts with different properties point to the same target object, thereby providing different multiple concurrent views of the same target object, whereby any changes in the target are reflected in all the views.

6. A method according to Claim 1 including
  - (a) defining each content object as an instance of a specified class; and
  - (b) causing a shortcut to automatically inherit the class of the target object it points to.
7. A method according to Claim 6 further including assigning *ad hoc* properties, not defined by the class, to a shortcut.
8. A method according to Claim 1 including arranging the content objects in a tree structure, and accessing each object by a hierarchic address.
9. A method according to Claim 8, including:
  - (a) providing a shortcut that points to a target object forming the root of a subtree within the tree structure; and
  - (b) accessing objects within the subtree through the shortcut as if they were in a subtree having the shortcut as its root.
10. A method according to Claim 9 wherein the shortcut contains a depth property, which specifies the number of layers that may be accessed within the subtree by way of the shortcut.
11. A method according to Claim 9 wherein the shortcut includes a filter property for selecting content objects within the subtree according to their properties.
12. A method according to Claim 9 wherein the subtree represents the structure of a webpage.

13. A web server computer system comprising:

- (a) a content store, storing content objects in a structured manner in a content store, some of the content objects in the content store being identified as shortcuts, pointing to other objects in the content store; and
- (b) means operative when a shortcut is accessed, for automatically accessing the target object pointed to by that shortcut from the content store, and returning said target object in place of the shortcut object.

14. A computer program product comprising a data carrier including a computer program for performing a method comprising:

- (a) storing content objects in a structured manner in a content store;
- (b) identifying some of the content objects in the content store as shortcuts, pointing to other objects in the content store; and
- (c) when a shortcut is accessed, automatically accessing the target object pointed to by that shortcut from the content store, and returning said target object in place of the shortcut object.